Introduction of DTH System for Telecasting

4084. SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed DTH system for the telecasting purpose to any private TV Channel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the legal compulsions thereof;

(d) whether Government have studied the impact of DTH on the viewers of Doordarshan; is so, the details of; and

(e) whether DTH system is going to effect the prospect of Government control media in India; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Legally, Broadcasting which currently includes DTH system, is regulated under the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 which essentially prohibits private Broadcasting. The Supreme Court held in 1995 that the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 is not adequate to meet the present requirements for regulation of Broadcasting since the technology of Broadcasting has undergone vast change from 1885. Accordingly the Supreme Court advised that Parliament may make such law as it deems fit to meet the situation. In pursuance of the advise given by the Supreme Court a Broadcasting Law is proposed to be introduced during the current session of the Parliament. In the absence of any such law or regulation, it was felt undesirable to permit any private TV channel to adopt DTH system for Broadcasting, particularly when such a right doesn't exist, as of today, with any Indian citizen as per the current India Telegraph Act. Therefore, the Government, in the Ministry of Telecommunication issued the Notification dated 19.12.96 with a view to licence the reception equipment for such DTH system making it illegal for anyone deal, possess or establish such reception equipment for a DTH service without a licence.

(d) The question of studying of impact of DTH on the viewers of Doordarshan or on the prospect of Government control of media in India does not arise since such a system is not available in the country as yet.

(e) DTH is basically a distribution system and in that sense a substitute for cable television. The proposed Law on Broadcasting would, inter-alia, provide for regulation and licensing of DTH services and as in case of cable operators, the DTH service provider may be asked to carry certain number of Doordarshan channels in his delivery package. Thus, a properly regulated DTH service may not effect the viewership of Doordarshan.

Payment of Operators of Direct to Home Service

4085. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision on the question of payment of operators of Direct to Home (DTH) service; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.